

OHIO AND HER SOCIAL NEEDS

H
V
Hv 2330
.035 1911

H
V
0
HV 2330



AMERICAN FOUNDATION
FOR THE BLIND INC.

HV 2330

①

cop. 1

1911

women and children suffer if the men "are killed or crippled or labor under conditions which inevitably tend to brutalize and degrade them." He said:

The development of modern large-scale production has brought about a very rapid increase in the number of workmen employed in industries which are operated without stopping twenty-four hours every day for seven days a week. These continuous industries are new phenomena; just as factories with dangerous machinery were new phenomena. There must be new legislation, and new and enlightened methods of judicial interpretation of law, to meet the new conditions. To quote the counsel of the Factory Commission: "It has become increasingly clear that it is the duty of the state to safeguard the worker, not only against the occasional accidents, but the daily incidents of industry, not only against the accidents which are extraordinary, but against the incidents which are the ordinary occurrences of industrial life." In just the same way it has become the duty of the state to safe-guard the worker against the "daily incidents" of a trade which takes the shape of inhuman toil.

With respect to this necessarily continuous seven-day work our old Sunday laws, dating back to an earlier generation, have broken down. Relief to the workers can be afforded only by increasing the labor force—one-seventh if necessary—to let part of the force off each day in the week and in that way giving every man one day of rest in seven. Legislation is needed to bring this about in this country, just as it has been brought about in France. And such legislation would be sustained by the courts unless they scuttled the logic on which the Sunday laws now on the statute books have been sustained; that is, as an exercise of the police power in protecting men from continuous toil. The supreme courts of practically every state in the union have gone on record as upholding Sunday laws, and in 1884 the United States Supreme Court expressed its approval of them "not from any right of the government to legislate for the promotion of religious observances, but from its right to protect all persons from the physical and moral debasement which come from uninterrupted labor." The priests and ministers and physicians of every mill town in America where the seven-day week governs could testify to how it undermines the comfort of their people, their happiness, and their health. At the present time, the progressive men in one big industry where it has been at its worst—steel—are tackling this seven-day schedule, and it looks as if they were going to be able to down it. The American Iron and Steel Institute has passed resolutions to that effect. So has the Federal Council of Churches of Christ in America, representing churches with a membership of thirty millions. It is high time we had six-day statutes and they were enforced.

In a continuous industry—whether it is a cement works or a trolley car, or a power

plant or a blast furnace, makes no difference—there are only two ways in which you can split up the twenty-four hours. There must be either two shifts of men each working twelve hours or three shifts each working eight. You can't compromise on nine or ten. You must choose between twelve or eight, and, with these two choices, surely the decision must be for the eight-hour day.

The workmen who put in the longest hours are classified by the New York State Bureau of Factory Inspection in a group labelled "sixty-three hours and over." That group includes roughly everybody above the ten-hour men—men who work anywhere from sixty-three to 119 hours per week. The report of this bureau for 1909 showed that out of 5059 workmen employed in the most important steel center in New York state, 4584 fell in this class. The majority of these men worked twelve hours a day either six or seven days a week. The same report shows that out of 12,991 workmen in paper and pulp mills in this state, 5650 worked over sixty-three hours a week. Out of 9543 employed in water, light, and power plants 2652 worked more than sixty-three hours per week. In all over 36,000 employes in the entire state worked a daily schedule of from ten to thirteen hours and over.

The effect of a twelve-hour day is paralyzing from the standpoint of the man's personal welfare, of his usefulness to his family, and of his usefulness as a citizen.

OHIO AND HER SOCIAL NEEDS

A state program was put forward by Rufus A. Longman of Cincinnati at the Ohio State conference of Charities and Correction this month in Toledo. President Longman urged additional institutions for special classes (inebriates, feeble-minded children, and the like), and the more thorough elimination of these classes from the general population, where they are a source of danger to themselves and others. The distinction of his address lay in his proposal to create a staff of visitors or parole officers for the purpose of extending the work of institutions for the insane outside of their walls in a system of after-care suggestive of the social service work which is being developed as an adjunct of general hospital administration in American cities. His recommendations included:

A law to compel fathers who fail to support their families to work on the public roads, their wages of \$1.50 per day to be applied to the support of their families; provision for special officers, somewhat in the nature of parole officers, employed by the

state, to look after the needs and make special arrangements for the after-care of the insane, subsequent to their discharge from the hospital; an institution for the treatment of inebriates; a state farm for vagrants and habitual beggars; provision for the proper care of the scores of feeble-minded children on our streets; and a law compelling every institution that cares for children to have a board of trustees.

What Mr. Longman said of the dull and troublesome boy applied in a general way in his consideration of the other classes taken up. He said:

In our physical ills, if our trouble be only one of the common ailments, we can safely entrust it to any well trained practitioner; but if our case be uncommon and the disease most threatening in its nature, we seek the most skilled specialist and pay him almost any price for his services. So in our social body we must not trust the weak, erring, and incorrigible to unskilled and untrained hands.

Social responsibility for prevention with respect to one group—the blind—was summed in a way applicable to other states by Dr. Louis Strickler, president of the Hamilton County Blind Relief Commission, Cincinnati. He said:

Twenty per cent of blindness is caused by infectious diseases. It is a matter of common observation that children, as a rule, do not contract these diseases until they start to school or until a brother or sister brings contagion home. The simplest and most effective way to prevent epidemics is school inspection, yet this is often opposed and resented by ignorant and prejudiced parents; nevertheless it ought to be regularly carried out in every school district of the state. Incompetent opticians, also, are responsible for much of the prevalent blindness; many of these opticians are men of little or no education and use only a grain of science and a ton of jugglery. . . . Syphilis is a prolific source of blindness, 25 per cent of it being attributable to this disease. The methods of controlling this disease have thus far been unavailing, but it is hoped that by education and instruction in sex hygiene, exemplified by the study of biology, knowledge can be imparted to every child without shocking its moral sensibility. . . . 14 per cent of blindness is due to accidents; and accidents are largely preventable. The use of defective materials in tools and the lack of proper guards in the machinery of factories are responsible for many accidents that issue in the loss or the impairment of eye-sight."

This, the twenty-first Ohio conference, brought six hundred and fifty delegates together, the largest number in the history of the body. In the words of a delegate, the conference drew the

scattered units of Ohio's social forces together and sent them back to their respective communities with added vital force and enthusiasm. Various current phases of social work were emphasized.

BUSINESS MEN AND CHARITIES

Edgar S. Adams, of the Cleveland Chamber of Commerce, saw in the endorsement of private charities by commercial bodies

the strengthening of the endorsed charity institution; the weeding out of superfluous and unworthy claimants; the prevention of fraud under the name and guise of charity; a bar to the establishment of new institutions where not needed; the increase of interest among business men, who are the greatest supporters; and the promotion of co-operation through the charity clearing-house.

This catalog of goods is so inclusive as to bespeak, in the minds of some social workers, the need at some later conference for a discussion of the effect upon the spirit and content of social work of "the business man in charity." What will be the affect in the course of a decade, they ask, of such dominance over the humanitarian agencies of a city by a local body of merchants and manufacturers? They point to the fact that the fresh enthusiasm of the 90's over the "business man in politics" has suffered considerable abatement. Both the constructive and negative aspects of the endorsement committee of chambers of commerce, in the cities where they are doing effective work, are being watched with interest.

Albion Fellows Bacon of Evansville, Indiana, brought the Ohio delegates face to face with the need for such a widespread state campaign on housing reform as that which she has instigated in the adjoining commonwealth. "The thing that holds back the housing problem is the ignorance of those who ought to help," she argued. "What we need is more publicity. People ought to know what is going on in their midst." She applied her gospel not only to the city but to the small town. J. M. Hanson of Youngstown set the complete destruction of slum districts as the goal to work for. Edward T. De-

